



The Lamplight

The Quarterly Newsletter
of the Chancellor Robert R Livingston
Masonic Library of the Grand Lodge of New York

nymasoniclibrary.org

(212) 337-6620

Summer 2024

Mission Statement

The Chancellor Robert R Livingston Masonic Library serves as the central research library of the Grand Lodge of New York. The Mission of the Library is to collect, preserve, interpret, and support the research and education for a community of scholars, including Freemasons, academics, undergraduate and graduate students, and the general public. Our institution features the foremost collections of the history, philosophy, culture and organization of American and International Freemasonry, with an emphasis on Freemasonry in New York State.

From the Trustees of the Library

The more things change, the more they remain the same. I know that is a phrase everyone has heard and used. In the case of your Livingston Library, it is a sign of very good news, indeed.

For three years, we, at the Library, have had the benefit of unrelenting support from our Junior Past Grand Master, Most Worshipful Richard J. Kessler. At every turn, he offered words of encouragement and advice that showed his commitment to the work of the Library Board and staff. His steady tangible influence made for smooth sailing all around.

As we bid adieu to Bro. Kessler, we, of the Library, could not be happier to greet our incoming Grand Master, Most Worshipful Steven A. Rubin, who has demonstrated a like commitment to the Library's mission. Throughout his tenure as Deputy Grand Master, Bro. Rubin has been a constant cheerleader for us. He hit the ground running in May by supporting efforts to increase the visibility and reach of the Library. He has already worked closely with Executive Director, Right Worshipful Michael LaRocco, to refresh dozens of displays throughout 23 rd Street. I know Grand Master Rubin will be encouraging our plans for even greater outreach statewide and in the development of secure sites outside of New York City, where displays with specific regional accents can become directly available to the Brethren.

Those of us who are closest to the Library appreciate this cooperative effort, spanning multiple administrations. The more we work together, the greater and broader the impact of the Library, its programs and its reach into each and every District of our Jurisdiction. By using our combined energies to promote our positive messages, all things are possible. I know we will see that impulse come to fruition in the months and years ahead.

To all the Brethren of New York Freemasonry, I thank you for your support of the Library's mission. We will be seeing you soon across the State as we bring that mission to life in a lodge room near you! It is a true pleasure serving you.

Right Worshipful Stephen S. King, President of the Board of Trustees of the Livingston Library

From the Executive Director

Greetings Patrons,

Did you know that throughout the day, we intake and process information – much of this analysis is done at the subconscious level? As a New York State Mason, you have access to a fountain of knowledge to freely study: the Chancellor Robert R Livingston Masonic Library. What is known to many scholars but not to as many Brothers is that your Livingston Library is numbered as one of the premiere fraternal research institutions. Scholars from across globe access the Library to advance personal, academic and the fraternal knowledge. With thousands of books available to you in digital and hardcopy, including our 17 Reading Courses - a keyword, title, author or subject is all that is required. Access to the Library catalog is simple as clicking [here](#).

The Museum is equally impressive. Dissecting the word “museum”, we observe the root “muse”. According to Oxford Languages, one of the definitions of muse is: “a person or personified force who is the source of inspiration for a creative artist.” Let the Museum inspire your next fraternal presentation. Access to the Museum catalog is simple as clicking [here](#).

In closing, whatever your fraternal interest, be assured that the Chancellor Robert R Livingston Library has something for you. If you have need assistance or have questions, I am only an email (mlarocco@nymasoniclibrary.org) or phone call away (212-337-6620).

Fraternally Yours,

Right Worshipful Michael LaRocco, Executive Director, Livingston Masonic Library

From the Director of Collections Service Internship Opportunities at the Livingston Masonic Library

The Livingston Masonic Library offers opportunities for aspiring library professionals to earn academic credits as interns. Graduate students in library and information science (or similar majors) can apply to the Library to work as interns on countless projects. This enables aspiring library professionals to earn course credit for their practicum project class(es), usually before they graduate their academic program. Graduate students intern at the Library for about a year to complete their practicum projects. Interns are not paid. The Library has hosted interns from Pratt Institute School of Information and Queens College. Non-graduate students, including those in high school, can also earn academic credit for working in the Library.

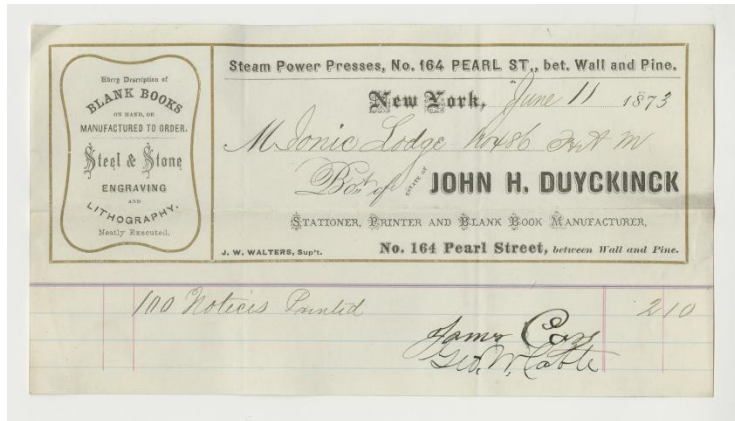
One recent example is a high school senior from Tarrytown, NY. The high school student’s internship was part of an independent study project for library science coursework. The student worked sixty hours in the Library, where she completed several librarian-related tasks - including book circulation, book processing and cataloging, filing periodicals, and Masonic genealogy. These hands-on experiences helped the graduating high school student further explore library science as a professional possibility.

If you or someone you know is interested in earning academic credit by interning with the Library, please contact me directly. I can be reached by email: Avastola@nymasoniclibrary.org, Phone: (212) 337-6619

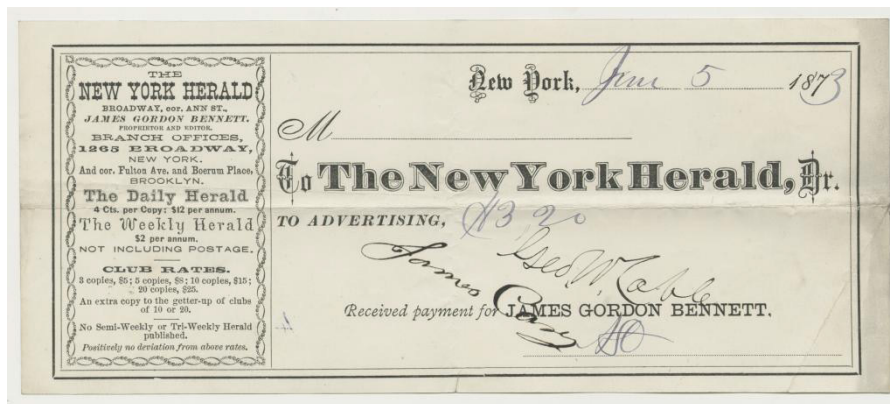
Brother Alexander Vastola, Director of Collections Services, Livingston Masonic Library

From the Museum Technician Receipts from the Past: Lodge's Expense in the 1870s

In the archive of Columbian Commandery No. 1, I came across piles of receipts belonging to Ionic Lodge No. 486, now known as Goldenrule Clermont McKinley Lodge 486 of NYC, from the Gilded Age of 1870s. These old receipts give us a glance into Masonic expenditures and dollar value of the day.

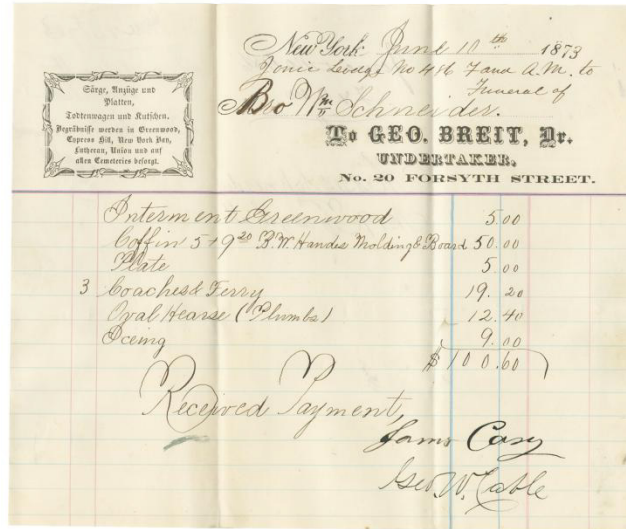


Directly above is a receipt of one hundred notices commission for \$2.10 (\$60 today) from Steam Power Presses, the printing service on Pearl Street. It was signed by George W. Cable, Master of the Lodge. Several other receipts from the same printer suggest that the Lodge secretary sent a hundred of meeting notices to the members every month.

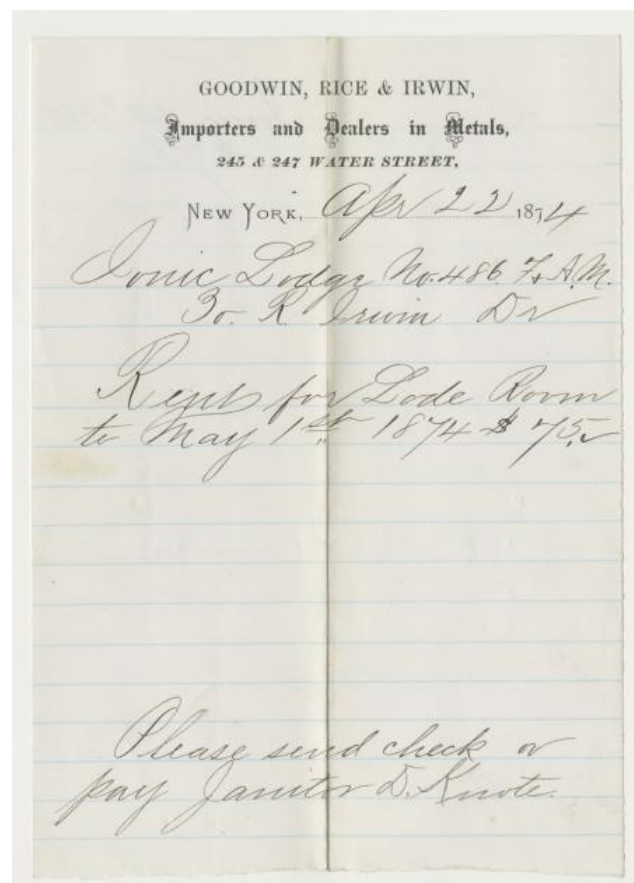


IONIC LODGE No. 486, F. and A. M.—Brethren:—
 You are hereby summoned to attend a special communication of the Lodge, to be held at the rooms, corner Bowery and Bleecker street, on Sunday, the 8th inst., at 1 o'clock P. M., sharp, for the purpose of paying the last tribute of respect to our late brother, William Schneider. Brethren of sister Lodges are fraternally invited to attend.
 By order of PETER MARTIN, Master,
 M. H. CULLINAN, Secretary.

Above is the receipt from *The New York Herald Newspaper* on Frankfort Street, ordered on June 5th, 1873, for \$3.20 (\$83 today). Found in the online newspaper archive, the receipt is certainly for the advertising of the Lodge's special communication posted on June 8th, 1873, summoning the members to pay the tribute to the late Brother. Although the receipt was signed by George W. Cable, the newly appointed Master of the Lodge, the advertising still listed its immediate Master, Peter Martin, as Master.



The above memorial service announced in the newspaper was for Brother William Schneider. We, coincidentally, found the receipt paid funeral receipts by the Lodge, issued by Brett Breit, the undertaker on Forsyth Street on June 10th. The receipt indicates Brother William Schneider is buried at Greenwood Cemetery, with totaling expense of \$100.60 (\$2630 today).



Another interesting receipt (see above) is for the Lodge's rent, paid to Robert Irwin for \$75 (\$1950 today). According to the Lodge directory at the time, Ionic Lodge met at 314-316 Bowery, which would be the corner of Bowery and Bleecker Street. Other lodges shared the same meeting room, such as Keystone Lodge No. 235 and Darcy Lodge No. 187. The building was called Irwin Building, which Robert Irwin was the owner until 1878 (Amanda, 2020). The letterhead, however, belonged to another firm on Water Street, assuming from the name, was co-owned by Irwin.

Note: Ionic Lodge No. 486 was organized in 1860, later merged with Golden Rule Lodge No. 770 into Golden Rule Ionic Lodge No. 486 in 1969 and merged again with Clermont McKinley Lodge No. 840 into now Golden Rule Clermont McKinley Lodge No. 486 in 1992.

References:

Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of New York 1874

Amanda. "The Story behind 316-318 Bowery - Village Preservation." Village Preservation - Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation, 4 June 2020, www.villagepreservation.org/2013/04/17/the-story-behind-316-318-bowery/.

Ratirat Osiri, Museum Technician, Livingston Masonic Library

Notice About the Library's Odilo E-Resources Platform

The Livingston Masonic Library offers several Masonic books and periodicals through Odilo, our e-resource platform: <http://nymasoniclibrary.odilo.us/>.

To set up an Odilo account, email Alexander Vastola at: Avastola@nymasoniclibrary.org

Additional Library Resources

Masonic Reading Course

The Library offers 17 reading courses. Information about the Library's Masonic Reading Course is available

at: <https://nymasoniclibrary.org/reading-course/>

Genealogy Research

The Library provides Masonic information on Master Masons, within the New York Grand Jurisdiction.

Information about the Library's Masonic genealogy research services is available

at: <https://nymasoniclibrary.org/research/>

Research Requests

For non-genealogy Masonic research requests, email Alexander Vastola at:

Avastola@nymasoniclibrary.org

To Our Loyal Patrons

We hope you continue to support our mission to advance the understanding of, and appreciation for, Masonic history and culture in New York State. There are two ways that donations can be made. First, checks can be made out to “Livingston Masonic Library” and sent to our mailing address below. Second is through the Brotherhood Fund Campaign portal on the Grand Lodge webpage (<https://www.nymasons.org/>).

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